

again boy, you'll never win (never win), you'll never win but the voice of truth tells me a different story, the voice of truth says "do not be afraid" and the voice of truth says "this is for my glory." Out of all the voices calling out to me I would choose to listen and believe the voice of truth. The stone was just the right size to put the giant on the ground and the waves, they don't seem so high on top of them looking down and I soar with the wings of eagles if I'd stop and listen to the sound of Jesus singing over me and the voice of truth tells me a different story, the voice of truth says "do not be afraid," and the voice of truth said "this is for my glory," out of all the voices calling out to me I would choose to listen and believe, I would choose to listen and believe, voice of truth, and I, I will listen and believe because Jesus you are the voice of truth."

Congressman EHLERS: Any Thursday morning that you are free, you are welcome to come to our weekly prayer breakfast. It is now my pleasure to introduce Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson of Missouri to present a reading from the Holy Scriptures.

Congresswoman JO ANN EMERSON: Many of you all know that in Genesis 33 we find the reunion of Jacob and Esau. As a young man, Jacob had swindled the inheritance away from his twin brother Esau by tricking their blind father Isaac. After that treachery, Jacob flees for fear of Esau's reprisal. Jacob toils away in a faraway land and builds up for himself great wealth. However, God leads Jacob back to the land of his birth to fulfill the covenant God had with Abraham. Jacob is so afraid of Esau that he divides his people so that some may survive the coming battle. I will read to you now from Genesis chapter 33, verses 1–12:

And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked and behold Esau was coming and four hundred men with him, so he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two female servants, and he put the servants with their children in front, then Leah with her children and Rachel and Joseph last of all. He himself went on before them bowing himself to the ground seven times until he came nearer to his brother. But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him and they wept. And when Esau lifted up his eyes and saw the women and children, he said "who are these with you?" Jacob said "the children whom God has graciously given your servant." Then the servants drew near, they and their children, and bowed down. Leah likewise and her children drew near and bowed down, and last, Joseph and Rachel drew near and they bowed down. Esau said "what do you mean by all this company that I met?" Jacob answered, "to find favor in the sight of my Lord." But Esau said, "I have enough my brother, keep what you have for yourself." Jacob said, "No, please, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept my present from my hand, for I have seen your face which is like seeing the face of God and you have accepted me. Please accept my blessing that is brought to you because God has dealt graciously with me and because I have enough." Thus he urged him and he took it, then Esau said "let us journey on our way and I will go ahead of you."

Congressman EHLERS: To present a prayer for national leaders I call to the platform one of the pillars of our House breakfast for many years, Congressman Ike Skelton.

Congressman IKE SKELTON: Whenever we pray, we should keep in mind the words of the British Poet Alfred Lord Tennyson who wrote: "more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." May we pray?

God Almighty and the Father of us all—as is stated in the Constitution of this great country: "we have common purpose as the

people of the United States, that we are to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity." Throughout our history, Lord, you have granted us leaders in national government, in industry, commerce, science, education and religion to serve this common purpose—for this we thank you. In our own day, we pray for our President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle, Vice President Joe Biden and his wife, Jill. We also pray for the members of the Congress, our leaders, Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the other leaders in the Congress, the Supreme Court, our cabinet members, our military leaders, and all government leaders in the states and the local communities. Help them to fulfill their sacred pledge and perform their duties with wisdom and compassion. May they seek your guidance by prayer, the support of the citizenry by listening to genuine needs, and witness to your strong arm behind everything. May leaders in business and economics be blessed with personal integrity and professional collaboration. Lord, bless our nation's leaders in religion and education so that they provide a powerful vision for your people. Instill in them common hopes and greater understanding of themselves and others—together, creating imaginations will establish a common ground to plant seeds for the future. In our families, Lord, raise up new leadership for our nation, may parents prove to be good role models by their faithfulness, self discipline, and basic moral standards. Help them to encourage young people to have great expectations and to accomplish great deeds. Especially, we pray today for those families who are involved in military service. Protect them, sustain them until they return safely and together with them we live in peace. In you, oh Lord, we find the power to live our constitutional convictions and in you we place our trust, calling upon your Holy Name, now and forever. Amen.

Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON: Good morning. I am Johnny Isakson from Georgia, and I am honored to Co-Chair the Senate prayer breakfast.

Senator AMY KLOBUCHAR: I am Amy Klobuchar from Minnesota, the other Co-Chair. On behalf of the United States Senate, we would like to welcome you today.

When Johnny and I took over the Senate prayer breakfast this year, we inherited some changes. There was a new Senate food service manager and she tripled the price of the breakfast. More importantly, they took the grits off the menu which did not sit well with Johnny or any of the other Southerners. Picture this, here I am, the first woman to do this, a Northern Senator, and the grits disappear from the menu and the price triples. This is a true crisis in leadership. So we asked for some divine intervention. After some tough negotiations, the price came down and, as if by a miracle, the grits returned to the menu.

Senator ISAKSON: Mr. President, if a Minnesota Yankee can save grits for a Southern Republican, there is hope for bipartisanship.

We gather together every Wednesday, not as Republicans or as Democratic members of the Senate, but as Americans with a deep and abiding faith in God and the hope for the future of our country, and the hope for the future of our world. As we do so, we gather not seeking what we do not have in common, but relishing that which we do have in common—a deep and abiding faith in Our Lord, and a great appreciation for our great country, the United States of America.

Senator KLOBUCHAR: Our Senate prayer breakfast is truly a special occasion. It is a chance for us to share and to build friend-

ships which might not otherwise be possible. This is especially important for all of us. The daily pressures of our work can way too often limit our horizons and narrow our circle of friends. These same pressures also make it all too easy for us to lose our way. Through prayer we can find our moral compass that will guide us back and lead us forward. And through prayer we are also humbled—that is important since modesty too often appears to be one of the first casualties of a life in Washington. As a new Senator, I found the prayer breakfast to be a respite from the day to day quarrels and strategic maneuvering of Washington. I have actually gotten to like grits and meet some new friends like Johnny.

Senator ISAKSON: Our Founding Fathers created this nation as one nation under God and we know that we are also one world under God. As we gather and pray together, we pray for the strength of our country, knowing that just as the breakfast we have enjoyed sustains our bodies, the faith we share in common with our God sustains our soul.

Congressman SHULER: As was mentioned earlier, the House and the Senate alternates chairing the National Prayer Breakfast, with his year's Prayer Breakfast being run by the House. We call on all of our colleagues and ask them to participate for various roles in the program. When we first put the program together, our next presenter was a member of the U.S. House. Since then, she has gotten herself into a new job in the Senate—but we still claim her as one of us. To present a reading from the Holy Scripture, I am happy to introduce my friend and the new Senator from New York, Kirsten Gillibrand.

Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND: It is an honor to be among so many faithful. I would like to offer a reading from Matthew, chapter 5, verses 14–16.

"You are the light of the world, a city on a hill cannot be hidden, neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven." Heath asked me to reflect on what this scripture meant to me. I thought about this passage and the parable of the talents. I believe that as God has blessed me with certain skills and talents, as New York's newest Senator, I offer them up for public service, with much gratitude and humility in my heart. May each deed from my hands and each word from my lips reflect God's light and his love for the world.

Congressman SHULER: It is now my pleasure to introduce Congressman Todd Akin of Missouri, who will present a prayer for world leaders.

COMMEMORATING THE 57TH ANNUAL NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST, FEBRUARY 5TH, 2009

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 14, 2009

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I had the privilege of co-chairing the 57th Annual National Prayer Breakfast with colleague, Congressman HEATH SHULER of North Carolina, on February 5, 2009. This annual gathering is held here in our Nation's Capital and is hosted by Members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives weekly prayer breakfast groups. I would like to request that

the continuation of the transcript of the 2009 proceedings be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD at this time.

57TH NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST—THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2009, HILTON WASHINGTON HOTEL, WASHINGTON, DC

CO-CHAIRS: U.S. REPRESENTATIVE VERN EHLERS AND U.S. REPRESENTATIVE HEATH SHULER

Congressman TODD AKIN: More than a hundred years ago there was a great statesman in England by the name of William Wilberforce. Some of you may have seen the movie "Amazing Grace"—the story of his life. He had two great aims as he worked in British government. The first was the abolition of slavery—which he was able to see just about on his death bed. The second was one that is not as well known—and that was to spread civility. I guess that means we are being civil with each other. One of the reasons that I have been involved in the Members' prayer breakfast is because it is a force for helping people to be civil and decent to each other—whereas many other things in politics seem to go the other direction.

Please join me in a prayer for our guests here. Dear Lord, we approach you today with thankful hearts for your great kindness and love and mercy, which immeasurably exceeds any merit of our own. We thank you for our guests, here assembled, guests who join us from the leadership of nations around the world. We ask your blessing once again on each of us, on our deliberations, and on the people that we serve. Dear Father, forgive us our increasing pride, for vainly considering that we can govern without your superintending providence. Our first President George Washington said, "it is impossible to govern rightly without God and the Bible." Help us once again to acknowledge our dependence upon you and to seek your aid through all of our days. Lord, you inspired our founders to acknowledge the fact that you have bestowed certain inalienable rights to all men—that among these are: life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Forgive us dear Father for ways in which each of us have fallen short in our most fundamental duty in preserving the precious gifts that you grant to all your children. Please, dear Father, batter down the pride of our stubborn hearts with a battering ram of your tender love. Lord Jesus, in a quiet place, come along side each of us, confront us, forgive us, wrap your arms around us and plant your truth deep within us that our lives will bless our families, our constituents and above all be pleasant in your sight. I pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Congressman EHLERS: One of the most difficult tasks that we have in arranging these Prayer Breakfasts is finding a speaker who is suitable to address such a large audience and to do it in meaningful terms that will relate to each and every one of you. We talked long and hard about different speakers and who we could get. Finally, we settled on someone we were hopeful we could get and now we are delighted that he is here with us today.

I first met our speaker at a NATO conference some years ago when I was a delegate from the United States Congress to meet with a NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Scotland. One of the speakers at the conference was a young man by the name of Tony Blair. He was erudite, eloquent, thoughtful, gave a great speech, and I thought, "this is a young man who could go places some day." Thank you for fulfilling that prophecy. I was deeply touched by his spirit and his passion as I am sure we all will be today. Speaking as an American, I deeply appreciate his friendship and support for our country and our efforts to extend freedom around the world.

Tony Blair was Prime Minister of the United Kingdom for 10 years. He described

his approach once as governing from the radical center, which is something I believe our nation could well imitate. Since stepping down in 2007, he has been involved in three challenges. He currently serves as the Quartet Representative to the Middle East, representing the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and the Russian Federation. He has been involved in youth sports in an effort to combat youth obesity—and we need you in our country for that too, Tony. And he created the Tony Blair Faith Foundation with the aim to show how faith is a powerful force for good in the modern world. He is one of the great moral leaders on the planet. Ladies and gentlemen, join me in welcoming the Right Honorable Tony Blair.

Tony Blair: It is an honor to be here and a particular honor to be with you, Mr. President. The world participated in the celebration of your election. Now the hard work begins. And now, also, we should be as steadfast for you in the hard work as in the celebration. You don't need cheerleaders but partners; not spectators, but supporters. The truest friends are those still around when the going is toughest. We offer you our friendship today. We will work with you to make your presidency one that shapes our destiny to the credit of America and of the world. Mr. President, we salute you and we wish you well.

After 10 years as British Prime Minister, I decided to choose something easy. I became involved in the Middle East Peace process. There are many frustrations—that is evident. There is also one blessing. I spend much of my time in the Holy Land and in the Holy City. The other evening I climbed to the top of Notre Dame in Jerusalem. You look left and see the Garden of Gethsemane. You look right and see where the Last Supper was held. Straight ahead lies Golgotha. In the distance is where King David was crowned and still further where Abraham was laid to rest. And in the center of Jerusalem is the Al-Aqsa Mosque, where according to the Qu'ran, the prophet was transported to commune with the prophets of the past. Rich in conflict, it is sublime also in history. The other month in Jericho, I visited the Mount of Temptation—I think they bring all the political leaders there. My guide—a Palestinian—was bemoaning the travails of his nation. Suddenly he stopped, he looked heavenwards and said "Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, why did they all have to come here?" It is a good place to reflect on religion: a source of so much inspiration; an excuse for so much evil. Today, religion is under attack from without and from within. From within, it is corroded by extremists who use their faith as a means of excluding the other: "I am what I am in opposition to you; if you do not believe as I believe, you are a lesser human being." From without, religious faith is assailed by an increasingly aggressive secularism, which derides faith as contrary to reason and defines faith by conflict. Thus do the extreme believers and the aggressive non-believers come together in unholy alliance. And yet, faith will not be so easily cast. For billions of people, faith motivates, galvanizes, compels and inspires, not to exclude but to embrace; not to provoke conflict but to try to do good. This is faith in action. You can see it in countless local communities where those from churches, mosques, synagogues and temples tend the sick, care for the afflicted, work long hours in bad conditions to bring hope to the despairing and salvation to the lost. You can see it in the arousing of the world's conscience to the plight of Africa. There are a million good deeds done every day by people of faith. These are those for whom, in the parable of the sower, the seed fell on good

soil and yielded sixty or a hundred-fold. What inspires such people? Ritual or doctrine or the finer points of theology? No. I remember my first spiritual awakening. I was 10 years old. That day my father—at the young age of 40—had suffered a serious stroke. His life hung in the balance. My mother, to keep some sense of normality in the crisis, sent me to school. My teacher knelt and prayed with me. Now my father was, and is, a militant atheist. Before we prayed, I thought I should confess this. "I am afraid my father doesn't believe in God," I said. "That doesn't matter," my teacher replied, "God believes in him; He loves him without demanding or needing love in return."

Tony Blair, Continued: That is what inspires. The unconditional nature of God's love. A promise perpetually kept. A covenant never broken. And in surrendering to God, we become instruments of that love. Rabbi Hillel was once challenged by a pagan, who said: "if you can recite the whole of the Torah standing on one leg, I will convert to being a Jew." Rabi Hillel stood on one leg and said, "That which is hateful to you, do it not unto your neighbor. That is the Torah, everything else is commentary, go and study it." As the Qu'ran states: "if anyone saves a person, it will be as if he has saved the whole of humanity." Faith is not discovered in acting according to ritual, but acting according to God's will and God's will is love. We might also talk of the Hindu: "living beyond the reach of I and mine," or the words of the Buddha: "after practicing enlightenment, you must go back to practice compassion," or the Sikh scripture: "God's bounties are common to all; it is we who have created divisions."

Each faith has its' beliefs. Each is different. Yet at a certain point each is in communion with the other. Examine the impact of globalization. Forget for a moment its' rights and wrongs. Just look at its' effects. Its' characteristic is that it pushes the world together. It is not only an economic force. The consequence is social, even cultural. The global community—it takes a village, as someone once coined it—is upon us. Into it steps religious faith. If faith becomes the property of extremists, it will originate discord. But if by contrast, different faiths can reach out to, and have knowledge of, one another, then instead of being reactionary, religious faith can be a force for progress.

The foundation which bears my name, and which I began less than a year ago, is dedicated to achieving understanding, action and reconciliation between the different faiths for the common good. It is not about the faith that looks inward, but the faith that resolutely turns us towards each other. Bringing the faith communities together fulfills an objective important to all of us, believers and non believers. But for me, as someone of faith, this is not enough. I believe restoring religious faith to its rightful place, as the guide to our world and its' future, is itself of the essence. The 21st century will be poorer in spirit, meaner in ambition, less disciplined in conscience, if it is not under the guardianship of faith in God.

I do not mean by this to blur the correct distinction between the realms of religious and political authority. In Britain we are especially mindful of this. I recall giving an address to the country at a time of crisis. I wanted to end my words with "God bless the British people." This caused complete consternation. Emergency meetings were convened. The system was aghast. Finally, as I sat trying to defend my words, a senior civil servant said, with utter disdain: "Really, Prime Minister, this is not America you know."

Neither do I decry the work of humanists, who give gladly of themselves for others and

who can often shame the avowedly religious. Those who do God's work are God's people. I only say that there are limits to humanism, and beyond those limits, God and only God can work. The phrase "fear of God" conjures up the vengeful God of parts of the Old Testament. But fear of God means really obedience to God: humility before God; acceptance through God that there is something bigger, better, and more important than you. It is that humbling of man's vanity, that stirring of conscience through God's prompting, that recognition of our limitations, that faith alone can bestow. We can perform acts of mercy, but only God can lend them true dignity. We can forgive but only God forgives completely in the full knowledge of our sin. And only through God comes grace; and it is God's grace that is unique. John Newton, who had been that most obnoxious of things, a slave trader, he it was who wrote the hymn, "Amazing Grace" — "Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved." It is through faith, by the grace of God, that we have the courage to live as we should and die as we must.

When I was Prime Minister I had cause often to reflect on leadership. Courage in leadership is not simply about having the nerve to take difficult decisions or even in doing the right thing—since oftentimes God alone knows what the right thing is. It is to be in our natural state—which is one of nagging doubt in perfect knowledge, an uncertain prediction—and to be prepared nonetheless to put on the mantle of responsibility and to stand up in full view of the world, to step out when others step back, to assume the loneliness of the final decision-maker, not sure of success but unsure of it. It is in that "not knowing" that the courage lies. When in that state our courage fails, our faith can support it, lift it up, and keep it from stumbling.

As you begin your leadership with this great country, Mr. President, you are fortunate, as is your nation, that you have already shown in your life courage in abundance. But should it ever be tested, I hope your faith can sustain you, and your family. The public eye is not always the most congenial. I was reminded of this, as I waited in London in the snow to fly to America and made the mistake of reading a British newspaper. It was the very conservative Daily Telegraph. A few days ago I gave an interview in which I remarked how much cleverer my wife was than me. The Telegraph has a famous letters page. In it was a letter from a correspondent that read something like, "Dear sir, with reference to your headline, 'Blair admits wife more intelligent than him,' I fail to see why this is news. Most of us have known this for a long time," and as a P.S. perhaps: "the bar has not been set high."

I finish where I began: in the Holy Land at Mount Nebo in Jordan, where Moses gazed on the Promise Land. There was a chapel there, built by pilgrims in the fourth century. The sermon that day was preached by an American, who spent his life as an airline pilot and then, after his wife's death, took holy orders. His words are the words of a Christian, but they speak to all those of faith, who want God's grace to guide their life. He said this:

"While here on earth, we need to make a vital decision . . . whether to be mere spectators or movers and shakers for the Kingdom of God . . . whether to stay among the curious, or take up a cross. And this means no standing on the sidelines—we are either in the game or we are not. I sometimes ask myself the question: 'If I were to die today, what would my life have stood for?' . . . The answer can't be an impulsive one, and we all need to count the cost before we give an an-

swer. Because to be able to say yes to one thing means to say no to many others. But we must also remember that the greatest danger is not impulsiveness but inaction."

It is fitting at this extraordinary moment in your country's history that we hear that call to action; and we pray that in acting we do God's work and follow God's will.

And by the way, God bless you all.

Congressman Shuler: Our next speaker, the 44th President of the United States has consistently made unity an important part of his ongoing message. His message of national and international unity is one that has given people around the world faith, hope, and the spirit to follow their dreams. I have met with numerous leaders who tell me that the citizens of their nations have a higher hope for the future because of the inspiration provided by this President.

My own children moved by the experience of the recent inauguration said to me, "Daddy, let's pray for the President." Children, politicians, and everyday citizens around the world are showing their hope and faith, through their prayers for this President. Today we continue in an unbroken tradition of 57 years as we are joined by the First Family at the National Prayer Breakfast. Ladies and gentlemen, it is my great honor to introduce to you the President of the United States of America.

COMMEMORATING THE 57TH ANNUAL NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST, FEBRUARY 5TH, 2009

HON. W. TODD AKIN

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 14, 2009

Mr. AKIN. Madam Speaker, I had the privilege of participating in the 57th Annual National Prayer Breakfast with my colleagues, Congressman HEATH SHULER of North Carolina and Congressman VERN EHLERS of Michigan, on February 5, 2009. This annual gathering is held here in our Nation's Capital and is hosted by Members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives weekly prayer breakfast groups. I would like to request that the summation of the transcript of the 2009 proceedings be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD at this time.

57TH NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST—THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2009, HILTON WASHINGTON HOTEL, WASHINGTON, DC

CO-CHAIRS: U.S. REPRESENTATIVE VERN EHLERS AND U.S. REPRESENTATIVE HEATH SHULER

President Barack Obama: Good morning. I want to thank the co-chairs of this breakfast, Representatives Heath Shuler and Vernon Ehlers. I also want to thank my good friend Tony Blair for coming today, as well as our Vice President, Joe Biden, members of the cabinet, members of Congress, clergy, friends, and dignitaries from across the world.

Michelle and I are honored to join you in prayer this morning. I know this breakfast has a long history in Washington, and faith has always been a guiding force in our family's life, so we feel very much at home and look forward to keeping this tradition alive during our time here. It is a tradition that I am told actually began many years ago in the city of Seattle. It was at the height of the Great Depression, and most people found themselves out of work. Many fell into poverty and some lost everything. The leaders of the community did all that they could for those who were suffering in their midst. And

then they decided to do something more—they prayed. It didn't matter what party or religious affiliation to which they belonged. They simply gathered one morning as brothers and sisters to share a meal and talk with God. These breakfasts soon sprouted up throughout Seattle and quickly spread to cities and towns across America, eventually making their way to Washington, DC. A short time after President Eisenhower asked a group of Senators if he could join their prayer breakfast, it became a national event. And today, as I see presidents, prime ministers and dignitaries here from every corner of the globe, it strikes me that this is one of the rare occasions that still brings much of the world together at a moment of peace and good will.

I raise this history because far too often we have seen faith wielded as a tool to divide us from one another—as an excuse for prejudice and intolerance. Wars have been waged, innocents had been slaughtered. For centuries entire religions have been persecuted, all in the name of perceived righteousness. There is no doubt that the very nature of faith means that some of our beliefs will never be the same. We read from different texts. We follow different edicts. We subscribe to different accounts of how we came to be here and where we are going next. And some subscribe to no faith at all. But no matter what we choose to believe, let us remember that there is no religion whose central tenet is hate. There is no God who condones taking the life of an innocent human being. This much we know. We know too that whatever our differences, there is one law that binds all great religions together. Jesus told us to "love thy neighbor as thyself." The Torah commands, "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow." In Islam there is the hadith that reads, "None of you truly believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself." And the same is true for Buddhists and Hindus, for followers of Confucius, and for humanists. It is, of course, the Golden Rule—the call to love one another, to understand one another, to treat with dignity and respect those with whom we share a brief moment on this Earth. It is an ancient rule, a simple rule, but also perhaps the most challenging. For it asks each of us to take some measure of responsibility for the well-being of people we may not know or worship with or agree with on every issue or on any issue. Sometimes it asks us to reconcile with bitter enemies or resolve ancient hatreds—and that requires a living, breathing act of faith. It requires us not only to believe but to do—to give something of ourselves for the benefit of others and the betterment of our world. In this way, the particular faith that motivates each of us can promote a greater good for all of us. Instead of driving us apart, our varied beliefs can bring us together to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, comfort the afflicted, to make peace where there is strife and rebuild what is broken, to lift up those who have fallen on hard times. This is not only our call as people of faith, but our duty as citizens of America, and our duty as citizens of the world, and it will be the purpose of the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships that I am announcing later today.

The goal of this office will not be to favor one religious group over another—or even religious groups over secular groups, it will simply be to work on behalf of those organizations that want to work on behalf of our communities, and to do so without blurring the line that our founders wisely drew between church and state. This work is important, because whether it is a secular group advising families facing foreclosure or faith-based groups providing job training to